

Tale *Feathers*

March 2002

Volume 69
Number 3

Sharing My Adventures in South Africa

Paul Bauer

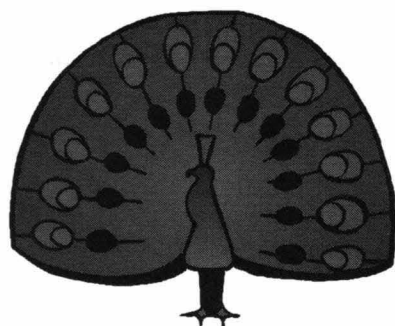
My birding and wildlife adventures in South Africa were exceptionally rewarding. I would like to share the highlights of this experience with my friends and Audubon members using a modest slide program. Some of the colorful birds, animals, and unique native cultures will be included along with a selection of the stunning scenic views.

Our group visited three private game reserves: Mala Mala adjacent to Kruger National Park; Ndumo and Hluhluwe. Each reserve has a different habitat to ensure the largest number of birds and mammals found. For the total trip we viewed over 320 species of birds and about 45 species of mammals including the big five up close and personal!

A four day extension to the Cape Town region offered a chance to experience this picturesque area. The scenic coast was explored to the Cape of Good Hope. We visited several major nature reserves, enjoyed a pelagic boat trip, and relished the many birds and flowers at the huge Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens.

**This program serves as our Audubon
General Meeting**

**Tues, March 19th at 7:30 p.m.
Powder Valley Nature Center**



**Annual
Meeting**

Registration Form Page 5

INSIDE

Annual meeting

Kenya trip

March birding
trips

Spring Birding
Festival

Audubon Camp
Scholarships

St. Louis Audubon Society

VOLUNTEERS

Sat and/or Sun, Mar 16/17

Meramec State Park Glade Restoration

Help the Sierra Club and MO DNR re-establish the open, native glade community of wildflowers and grasses on selected, rocky slopes in the park.

Hard, physical work, but the results are well worth it!

Contact Susan Farrington at (314) 577-9402 or susanfmo@aol.com.

Two Rivers NWR Work Day March 23

Join us on Saturday, March 23 as we work to restore the natural character of the Gilbert Lake area of Two Rivers National Wildlife Refuge outside Grafton, Illinois.

Repeated river flood events have deposited all kinds of foreign materials-from styrofoam to aerosol cans to tractor tires. Help us make this habitat more habitable for its wild residents. We will work from about 10a to 2p, with lunch afterward in Grafton. Bring gloves, boots, and drinking water-trash bags will be provided.

Call Mitch Leachman at (314) 739-5112 for more info and to sign up.

Join us for the next newsletter mailing party! March 22nd at 7:30 p.m.

Call or write the editor for time and place.

Member Profiles

Vicki Flier was elected to the board as Vice President for Education in April 1999.

How would you describe your educational background?

I have a Masters in Marketing from Maryville University. I worked for twenty years as a bookkeeper/accountant until I had the good fortune to retire to be a full time mother.

How would you describe your current occupation?

Caregiver for my mother and community volunteer.

What is your current function/role with SLAS?

Vice President Education. Through which I have helped start a speakers bureau and create the Master Naturalist Certificate at St. Louis Community College-Meramec. I also assist the committee with education days at the Zoo, Powder Valley and Busch Conservation Area.

What is your #1 conservation concern at any level, from local to global?

Having enough (of anything) for my grandchildren to see, love and observe.

In what ways can NAS or SLAS address this concern?

Pass along the passion for preservation through education, and education needs to be on many different levels. In the classroom, we try to instill in the kids that, as consumers, they have the power to change. Buy products that are made in the USA-imports might be cheaper, but are usually not made within strict EPA-like pollution guidelines. Buy products in recyclable containers and recycle it. Buy products with the least amount of packaging. When we leave the classroom, the kids have ideas of how they can help the environment.

What is your long-term vision/goals for SLAS?

I would like to see the chapter continue with the strong education outreach group we have. I like the idea of meetings to help educate-the January speaker presented how National Audubon is promoting conservation through legislation. I think activism in this organization is a good thing-we have started to put conservation back into Audubon. Sue Gustafson has done great work, like raising awareness that some birds need the stars to navigate during migration and turning some bright lights off a couple times a year can make a big difference.

We are interconnected with nature, and in the end, if we don't protect the environment, we will not survive.

Get Published!

The deadline for the April issue is March. 10. Please send articles, events and letters to Anne.

E-mail ambolte@swbell.net

phone 314.832.0938

post 6939 Sharp

St. Louis, MO 63116



EMERSON

Special Thanks!

Conservation Report

Sue Gustafson

Mississippi River public meeting - The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has indicated that it will host a public meeting in St. Louis sometime this spring to discuss issues related to the management of the Mississippi River. As of this newsletter deadline, the date has not been set, but please check the St. Louis Audubon website (www.stlouisaudubon.org) where the date/location will be announced as soon as it is available. These public meetings are a good opportunity for the various interests (such as the barge industry, agriculture, or organizations such as ours concerned with wildlife habitat and environmental quality) to voice their opinion on river management. Our members are encouraged to attend such public meetings as an indication to the Corps that there is growing concern for the Corps to establish priorities for river management that will benefit birds and other wildlife.

More threats to birds...First it's the poisoning of black birds that can cause harmful effects on non-target bird species, and now a pesticide used in mosquito control is posing threats to birds. An article in the September-October 2001 issue of Audubon magazine discussed the effects of several pesticides used in mosquito control measures. As part of a broader effort to fully document the effects of pesticides on wild birds in the U.S. and cancel the most harmful substances, American Bird Conservancy (ABC) and its partners, including Audubon, are currently coordinating efforts aimed at canceling the use of one of those pesticides: fenthion. Fenthion is currently being considered for re-registration by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). It is extremely toxic to birds, but is still used to kill mosquitoes in some cities by aerial spraying. The campaign is already meeting some success in encouraging the EPA and other agencies to more carefully scrutinize the pending re-registration of fenthion. Last year, ABC sent a letter to the EPA from 40 national and regional conservation and scientific groups (see www.banfenthion.org/links.htm for a complete list of these groups) urging the cancellation of fenthion during the current re-registration process. On Monday, January 28, ABC filed a "60 day letter" announcing their intent to sue EPA unless they can remedy the fenthion threat. We also need your help now to press EPA to do the right thing for birds, other wildlife, and the environment by canceling fenthion. Fenthion is a proven bird killer that has killed birds even when applied according to label instructions. In Collier County, Florida, fenthion has recently killed 16 species of shorebirds, including the endangered Piping Plover, as well as Black Skimmers, Dunlins, Western Sandpipers, and Sanderlings. Fenthion is acutely toxic to aquatic resources as well. Several less damaging alternatives exist and are used around the U.S. ABC has established a new web site - www.banfenthion.org - which enables concerned citizens and organizations to send an e-mail (with one click) to the various agencies that will decide whether fenthion use continues. The site also includes more information about fenthion's effects, and documents its impacts on birds, other wildlife, and people.

Spring Birding Festival Saturday April 20 2:00 to 3:30 p.m.

Spring has arrived and more migrant song birds are pouring in each day. The stunning beauty of these tiny migrants can be breathtaking and has made birdwatching one of the fastest growing outdoor activities in America today. Join us for this special program which is the seventh joint effort of the St. Louis Audubon Society and the Powder Valley Nature Center.

We will share a superb video providing extreme closeup views and sounds of many beautiful birds. Numerous tips and suggestions are provided in the video defining what details to observe when starting to identify birds. Also, the best nearby locations to find these migrant birds will be illustrated. Several handouts will be available, and upcoming bird walks will be announced.

Budget Safari to Kenya: June 13-23, '02

Join our 6th St. Louis Audubon Safari to East Africa. This classic safari will visit a wide range of habitats and see massive herds of mammals. Over 50 species are found, including elephants, rhino, lion, leopard, and cape buffalo up close and personal! On each trip we also manage to find up to 320 species of birds, and experience the unique cultures of the Samburu, Kikuyu and Maasai people. Each day offers hundreds of stunning opportunities for unequalled photographs to record your once and a life-time adventure.

Our budget safari costs \$3295 per person with double occupancy which includes round trip air fare via Northwest/KLM from New York through Amsterdam directly to Nairobi, Kenya. Notice the timing of this trip is great for teachers and families with teenagers. It is the price and timing of this safari that continues to make it so very popular.

We have fine tuned this safari for the maximum enjoyment of viewing wildlife at a relaxed pace. We stay a minimum of two nights in each national park lodge, which permits at least four game drives in each park at a relaxed pace with midday free time to enjoy the lively lodges and swimming pools, or to explore their elegant gardens for birders. Our safari starts and ends at Safari Park Hotel, located with 200 acres of lush gardens and pools about six miles from downtown Nairobi. On our first day, we travel north making several birding stops in different habitats, have lunch at the famous Mt. Kenyan Safari Club and then go birding in these higher altitude forests. Our drive continues to the Samburu Game Reserve which has a sizable river passing through 40 miles of dry brush land with many birds and animals found nowhere else in Kenya.

We also spend two days at Lake Nakuru National Park, famous for massive flocks of flamingos and numerous shorebirds and water birds. This lake is surrounded with lush forests which hosts many species of birds, both species of rhino, leopards and the rare Rothschild Giraffe. Finally, we enjoy three nights in the huge grasslands of the Maasai Mara/Northern Serengeti which is famous for enormous herds of wildebeest, zebra, lions birds of prey and unforgettable sunsets.

Call Paul Bauer at 314-921-3972 to obtain a detailed daily itinerary by mail.

Habitat Restoration Fund: Gift from Thomas Creley

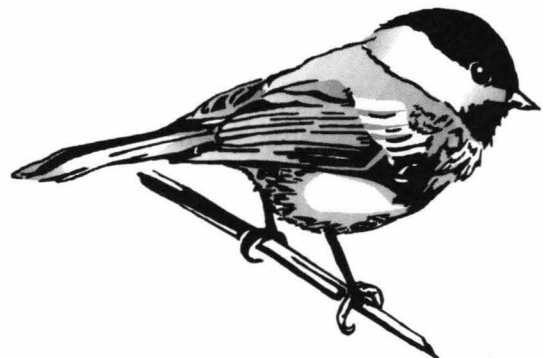
John Solodar

For a number of years, various members of the St. Louis Audubon Society Board of Directors have expressed interest in establishing the means whereby SLAS might become involved in wildlife habitat acquisition, maintenance and restoration. Many other local Audubon chapters are active in these areas, but funding such a venture out of our regular budget seemed to be out of the question. Recently the Board voted to establish a Habitat Restoration Fund in the hope of encouraging donations which would be devoted to wildlife habitat retention in the greater St. Louis area.

We are now very pleased to announce that shortly after we established the Habitat Restoration Fund, we received a very generous gift from SLAS member Thomas J. Creley. A portion of Tom's gift has been set aside as cash to support our portion of the least tern nesting habitat project at Riverlands Environmental Demonstration Area. The viewing blind which we will erect at Riverlands will carry a dedication to Tom's wife, Cathleen. The entire Board thanks Tom very much for this significant gift.

The least tern project is currently in the planning stage, but we expect construction to begin by mid-spring. The rest of the money has been invested to be available for future projects as they come along.

In addition to habitat restoration, maintenance and acquisition, we anticipate that the Fund may also be used for obtaining conservation easements where appropriate.. Anyone wishing to join us in these endeavors is encouraged to contact any Board member about making a donation, large or small, to the Fund.



Audubon Camp Scholarships

The St. Louis Audubon Society is once again pleased to offer scholarships to the Audubon Ecology camps in Maine, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. The scholarships cover the cost of the 6 to 7 day camp session fee and include up to \$200.00 towards the cost of transportation.

Educators are especially encouraged to apply. Camp scholarship information is typically sent to the science coordinators of the St. Louis area school districts in January. Interested applicants unable to obtain this information from their science coordinators should contact:

Julie Leemann
1004 Sanders Dr.
Crestwood, MO
(314) 962-2093

Camp details are also available on the following websites:

Maine	www.maineaudubon.org
Minnesota	www.audubon-center.org
Wisconsin	www.audubon.org/local/sanctuary/hunthill

Persons interested in having a great vacation and attending camp on their own should call 1-866-428-3826. Experiencing an Audubon camp is truly a wonderful and enriching experience. They are well kept secrets and attendance is often lower than one would expect for the high quality programs offered at very reasonable costs.

Annual Audubon Meeting

Mark your calendars for St. Louis Audubon Society's Annual Membership Meeting at Powder Valley Nature Center on Sunday, April 14, 2002. This year, two great reasons to attend-a buffet lunch catered by Hendri's and our speaker is Roger Still, Executive Director of Audubon Missouri.

11:00 a.m.-the day begins with informal bird and nature walks led by SLAS members and nature center staff.

1:00 p.m.-Hendri's will serve a lunch buffet, including drinks and dessert.

2:30 p.m.-we will have a short business meeting, including the election of the Board.

3:00 p.m.-join us in the auditorium for a talk with Roger Still, recently appointed Executive Director of Audubon Missouri. Roger arrives after several successful years as director of The Nature Conservancy's Missouri Chapter. Learn about his vision for the future of Audubon in Missouri and have an opportunity to ask questions.

The day is open to all, but only current SLAS members will be allowed to vote in the Board election. The cost is \$13 per person. Please let us save you a seat and reserve early by using the registration form below.

Annual Audubon Meeting Registration Form

Please mail this form or a copy with payment by check to:

Mitch Leachman, 11340 Gardenview Ln, #1, St. Ann, MO 63074

Make check payable to St. Louis Audubon Society.

_____	\$13.00 x _____	= _____
Name(s)	Fee No.	Total Enclosed

Minnesota wasn't so Cold...Really

Jim Malone

This January, 23 of us made an extended week-end trip to Duluth, Minnesota to see the Northwoods winter specialties. Although this year's mild weather and lack of snow cover made it difficult, we found many targeted birds, and any opportunity to be outdoors with dedicated birders is always a treat! On the way to Duluth, some of us stopped in Sparta, Wisconsin to view a Mandarin Duck known to frequent the area. Although this may be an escaped bird from a private collection, it was quite beautiful. On the outskirts of Superior we also saw a Ruffed Grouse perched atop a Tamarac.

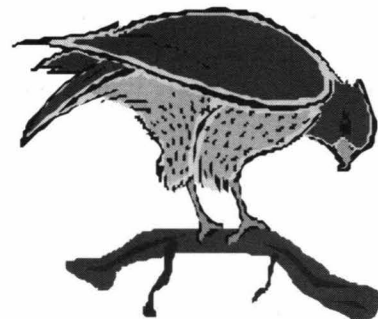
On our first day in Minnesota we visited Aitkin county. In the area immediately around Gun Lake, we found lots of Common Ravens, a pair of Black-Billed Magpies, a Rough -Legged Hawk, and black-capped Chickadees. From here we went to Palisades, MN for a lunch break, and found some great feeders filled with Pine and Evening Grosbeaks, House sparrows, Dark-eyed Juncos, and more Chickadees. Cruising the neighborhoods of Palisades, we also found Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers, Starlings, Bald Eagles, and some other common urbanites. After lunch we visited the home of Steve and Jo Blanich near Crosby, MN to see the flock of White-winged Crossbills which had been frequenting their feeders. While there, we saw Red-bellied Woodpecker, more Chickadees, and Red-Breasted Nuthatches in addition to great views of the Crossbills. On the way back to Duluth, we had a couple of quick sightings of Sharp-tailed Grouse, but nothing everyone could see. As we re-entered Duluth, we went by a site not 5 miles from our motel where a Snowy Owl had been hanging around. After a bit of searching, we were able to see the owl, but it was getting pretty dark.

The next morning we went past the Owl site as we headed out for the day, and the Snowy was in plain view sitting on a wooden sign. We set up scopes (although they were hardly needed) and watched the owl cough up pellets from previous successful hunting trips. Moving north to a road where Black-backed Woodpeckers and Boreal Chickadees had been seen in previous days but were unable to find them. We visited many sites in the Sax Zim area with little success, then we went to Stone Lake Road to get out and walk a bit continuing to search for woodpeckers and

owls. What we did find was a small house with a very active feeder which lured White-breasted Nuthatches, Black-capped Chickadees, Common Redpoles, and a single Hoary Redpole. After spending a bit of time there, we moved off to continue our search for Great Gray Owls. During the day, we crossed paths with Northern Shrikes, and a couple Rough-Legged Hawks, but no owls.

On our last full birding day in Duluth, we went out with local guide Michael Hendrickson in search of the northern birds which had escaped us. On highway 2 north of Two Harbors, we found some cooperative Gray Jays, another nice Northern Shrike, lots of Common Ravens, and a quick moving silhouette which looked enticingly like a Northern Goshawk. We visited two feeder locations north of Duluth and saw more Common Redpoles and another Hoary Redpole (at closer range) in addition to Chickadees, PineGrosbeaks, and Evening Grosbeaks. We moved to Duluth Harbor to chase a Gyrfalcon reported earlier that day by a couple of groups of birders, but were unable to re-locate the bird. Finally, a few of us went back to Sax Zim bog for a final late afternoon search for Great Gray Owls. Near dusk our diligence was rewarded with a Great Gray near Nickols Lake. Although only a handful of us saw this huge owl, it was well worth it for those who did.

If you would like to see some of the digital pictures Mike Grant took on this trip, log on to the St. Louis Audubon Society website at www.stlouisaudubon.org and look for the trip reports page. If you think this sounded like a fun outing, come with us on one of our future trips as you see them in Tale Feathers.



Late Winter/Early Spring Birding with St. Louis Audubon Society

Jim Malone

An Early February birding trip at Riverlands usually means bitter cold winds, ice in the river, and a wide variety of waterfowl to search through. Although this year we had plenty of wind, temperatures in the 40s and 50s made for a pretty mild day. We had a reasonable variety of dabblers including Gadwalls, American Black Ducks, Northern Pintails, Northern Shovelers, and Green-Winged teal. A Sharp-Shinned hawk hunting the fields near Heron Pond was an unexpected treat, as were very close views of Horned Larks and Eurasian Tree Sparrows. Killdeer were about in small numbers and the male Red-Winged Blackbirds are beginning to set up territories, perching on tall weeds announcing their ownership of their own little patches of ground. Winter's weak grasp on the St. Louis area seems to be slipping away quickly. Come out and join us this spring as we watch the changes unfold.

March 9 (Saturday) Busch C. A., 8:00 AM Early Spring birding in the St. Louis is always difficult to predict. By March, it is possible to see early Pine Warblers picking at pine cones near the Fallen Oak nature trail. Wintering finches are usually still around and may show up at the feeders there. Waterfowl begin moving in earnest by now and Loons and Grebes are always possible. The earliest shorebirds may be wandering in if the weather has been mild, and some of the early migrating passerines are beginning to show up. Come and join us as we look through the Busch/ Weldon Springs area for the best of the season. To get there; take highway 40 (I-64) West from St. Louis to St. Charles County. Go left on highway 94 to the first stop light after the I-64/94 intersection. Turn right at highway D and follow it for a couple of miles to the entrance to Busch Conservation Area. We will meet in the parking area at Hampton Lake (just to the left of the entrance road). Come join us and get the jump on spring birding.

March 17 (Sunday) Horseshoe Lake, 8:00 AM In early spring, the ducks which moved further south than St. Louis last winter are moving north through our area. Some early passerines are returning, and native sparrows are represented with their greatest variety and numbers. Grebe variety is also good at this time, and the chance to see Loons is also good. The borrow pits near the landfill on the highway 203 side of the lake can have interesting varieties of wintering gulls, and is also a great site for raptors. This outing will involve small amounts of walking on paved level ground. To get to the meeting point, take I-70 East from St. Louis. After passing the I-70/I-64 split, take the exit for highway 111. Turn left (north) and follow highway 111 about 2-3 miles to the Park entrance on the left. We will meet in the first parking lot on the right as you enter the park.

University City Memorial Day Run, May 27, 2002.

The 10K and 5K race benefits in part the Green Center, an environmental education center located in University City. Please contact Jane Schaefer, (314) 721- 4647 for registration and race and donation info, or register on-line at www.fleetfeetsports.com.

Tale Feathers

Tale Feathers is published monthly by the St. Louis Audubon Society. Messenger Printing prints 3,000 copies of each newsletter on recycled paper using soy ink. Anne Bolte edits the newsletter.

St. Louis Audubon Society 2001 - 2002

St. Louis Audubon Society
P.O. Box 220227
Kirkwood, MO 63122
Phone: 314-822-6595

Officers

President - Mary Dueren	314-576-1473
VP Education - Vicki Flier	314-968-9166
VP Conservation - Sue Gustafson	314-968-8128
VP Finance - John Solodar	314-862-5294
Treasurer - Mary Dueren	314-576-1473
Seretary - Mary Smidt	636-227-6127

Board Members

Mike Arduser	314-968-8479
Bill Brandhorst	314-965-7269
Anne Bolte	314-832-0938
Tom Day	314-962-4064
Joe Eades	314-966-3171
Mike Grant	636-579-0208
Diane Johnson	636-458-4369
Dency Kahn	314-997-4555
Mitch Leachman	314-739-5112
Pat McCormick	636-825-2842
Jim Malone	636-536-1119
Jerry Miller	314-389-3969
Dave Pierce	314-434-1651

St. Louis Audubon Society

P.O. Box 220227

St. Louis, Mo. 63122

Ph: 314.822.6595

www.stlouisaudubon.org



a member of Earth Share
of Missouri

NON-PROFIT
ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
ST. LOUIS, MO.
PERMIT NO. 5128

This form makes you a member of **both** the National and St. Louis Audubon.

Audubon is a membership organization dedicated to protecting birds, other wildlife, and their habitats. Our members are the source of our volunteer strength and the foundation of our financial support. By becoming a member, you will receive National Audubon Society's magazine as well as the St. Louis Audubon Society newsletter, *Tale Feathers*.

St. Louis Audubon Society Membership Form

Membership category desired:

- ☐ Introductory / \$20
☐ Special two-year Introductory / \$30
☐ Sr. Citizen / \$15
☐ Student / \$15
☐ Other / _____

Send a check made out to:

National Audubon Society

P.O. Box 220227

St. Louis, Mo. 63122

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

N01 7XCH

Please support your local chapter. Use this form to join or renew.